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# Military Police Heroism

*By Mr. Andy Watson*

*It is challenging to list only a few examples of military police heroism in the space allotted. The Soldiers of the Military Police Corps have proven themselves on countless occasions and continue to uphold the motto of “Assist, Protect, Defend.” In this issue, two members of the Military Police Hall of Fame are also featured. Colonels (Retired) John F. Hyde and Angus B. MacLean not only demonstrated bravery on several occasions but also dedicated long careers to the Military Police Corps.*

## **First Lieutenant Hulon C. Allen, Jr. Distinguished Service Cross Vietnam War**

First Lieutenant Hulon C. Allen, Jr. was serving with Company B, 716th Military Police Battalion when faced with immediate danger. The incident is best described by his Distinguished Service Cross citation:

“For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam: First Lieutenant Allen distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 4 December 1968 while checking security posts at night in the Gia Dinh area of Saigon. As he was traveling by jeep between posts, he was struck on the shoulder by a grenade. Immediately shouting a warning to two other passengers, he attempted to toss the grenade, but was unable to grasp it as it rolled around on the floor of the moving vehicle. Throwing himself on the deadly missile, he shielded his comrades until they escaped. He then jumped from the jeep and managed to dive for cover just as the grenade exploded.”<sup>1</sup>

First Lieutenant Allen said, “The grenade was bouncing around too much. I couldn’t get my hands on it so I got on top of it. It was all I could think of doing at the time—the men had to have time to get away.”<sup>2</sup> First Lieutenant Allen was thrown over an embankment by the blast but was uninjured. Immediately after the explosion, Viet Cong forces opened fire on the military police Soldiers. Ten minutes later another military police patrol armed with an M-60 machine gun joined the fight and the Viet Cong broke contact and dispersed.<sup>3</sup>



**General Creighton W. Abrams congratulates First Lieutenant Hulon C. Allen, Jr. after presenting him the Distinguished Service Cross.**

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**Captain George N. Bliss**  
**Medal of Honor**  
**Civil War**

Captain George N. Bliss was in command of Company C, 1st Rhode Island Cavalry, which was serving as the provost guard near Waynesboro, Virginia, on 28 September 1864.<sup>4</sup> While patrolling, he observed the Union lines retreating before the attack of a greatly superior force of Confederates. He tried to rally his men and, without orders, joined in the defense of the Union lines and charged the enemy. Captain Bliss was soon alone in attacking the enemy, with his supporting Soldiers either wounded or unable to follow. Captain Bliss advanced, slashing through Confederate lines until surrounded. He received three saber wounds, was clubbed, and his horse was shot from under him.<sup>5</sup>

Taken prisoner, Captain Bliss received medical attention from one of the Soldiers he wounded during his charge. Captain Bliss was then transferred to Libby Prison for four months and placed on a list of prisoners to be executed as a reprisal for Confederate Soldiers killed by Union forces. He described the prison food as both meager and the "... vilest food I ever ate."<sup>6</sup> Escaping execution, Captain Bliss was returned to Union forces during a prisoner exchange. Years after the Civil War, he would accept invitations from his former captors and make frequent visits to the South. He was recognized for his brave charge years later and was awarded the Medal of Honor on 3 August 1897.<sup>7</sup>

**Captain George N. Munro**  
**Distinguished Service Cross**  
**World War I**

Captain George N. Munro served with the 5th Train Headquarters and Military Police Company, 5th Division, American Expeditionary Force. Captain Munro organized an attack on several machine gun emplacements that were eventually overtaken. Captain Munro's citation per War Department Order 89, 1919, read:

"The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to George N. Munro, Captain, U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in action near Cunel, France, October 10, 1918. Organizing a company of men who had become separated from their own organizations, Captain Munro led them with exceptional skill and bravery in an attack, materially aiding in the advance. In the course of the assault, this officer was killed by machine gun fire."<sup>8</sup>

**First Lieutenant John F. Hyde**  
**Silver Star**  
**World War II**

First Lieutenant John F. Hyde served with the 9th Armored Military Police Platoon during World War II. During the Battle of the Bulge, then Second Lieutenant Hyde was maintaining a roadblock when he was confronted by Lieutenant General George S. Patton. Second Lieutenant Hyde prevented the general from going through the roadblock despite General Patton's strenuous objections.<sup>9</sup> Second Lieutenant Hyde explained his refusal, stating that earlier that morning he had captured two Germans less than 100 yards from the roadblock. After being denied passage, General Patton asked for the military police officer's name and Second Lieutenant Hyde complied. He expected that the general, already famous for his temper, would deliver a blistering reprimand. Instead, Second Lieutenant Hyde received a letter of promotion to first lieutenant.<sup>10</sup>

During operations at the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen, Germany, First Lieutenant Hyde served as bridge control officer. The bridge was taken by Soldiers of the 9th Armored Division. After its capture, German forces



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tried to destroy the bridge through explosives, demolitions divers, artillery fire, aerial bombardment, and assaults. Military police Soldiers at the bridge kept traffic flowing across the Rhine into Germany, unable to take cover during the frequent attacks. First Lieutenant Hyde established rigid traffic patterns to maintain a constant flow of Soldiers and vehicles. For his organization and leadership under extreme conditions, and for his gallantry under fire, he was awarded the Silver Star.<sup>11</sup>

John Hyde would move up through the Military Police Corps in various positions, even serving as provost marshal of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, at the end of World War II. Later in his career, Colonel Hyde served as chief of security and investigation for the Office of the Provost Marshal General. He remained in the Military Police Corps until 1973 and then became deputy chief of transit police for Washington, DC. He retired after 10 years but would serve as a consultant and advisor until fully retiring in 1992.<sup>12</sup>

**Staff Sergeant Lawrence M. McQueeney**  
**Silver Star**  
**World War II**

Staff Sergeant Lawrence M. McQueeney was serving with the Military Police Company for the II Philippine Corps when he was recognized for gallantry in action. He rescued a severely wounded man trapped in a foxhole near Lamo, Bataan, on 5 April 1942.<sup>13</sup> During a bombing raid, Staff Sergeant McQueeney voluntarily left his place of shelter and safety to rescue a severely wounded fellow Soldier who was trapped in an enclosed foxhole, further endangered by exploding ammunition.



**Staff Sergeant William T. Orr and Sergeant James S. Powell**  
**Silver Star**  
**Normandy Invasion, World War II**

Staff Sergeant William T. Orr and Sergeant James S. Powell were members of the 214th Military Police Company during the Normandy invasion. On 6 June 1944, Soldiers of that unit were en route to Omaha Beach when they had to abandon their transport. Their LCI (landing craft, infantry) was hit first by mines and then by German artillery. Evacuating the burning craft, the Soldiers made their way to the "Dog White" section of the beach in neck-deep water. Once on the beach, the military police Soldiers (along with other members of the Engineer Special Brigade) realized that the previous assault group consisting of infantry and Rangers was pinned down by devastating enemy fire.

Bolstering the first assault group's forces, the brigade Soldiers assisted in pushing the enemy back. Members of the 214th Military Police Company immediately took over the traffic control situation and evacuated wounded under enemy fire. As the fighting moved inland, the 214th established traffic control points and by 13 June created a brigade stockade for enemy prisoners of war. For their part in the assault, Staff Sergeant Orr and Sergeant Powell were awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action against the enemy.<sup>14</sup>

**Corporal Frank M. Thompson**  
**Silver Star**  
**Korea**

Corporal Frank Thompson was serving with the 3d Military Police Company performing road reconnaissance near Sonni-ni, Korea, on 13 February 1951, when he came under fire.<sup>15</sup> Corporal Thompson and another military police Soldier had left their vehicle and were surveying terrain for future traffic movement. When they were approximately one hundred yards from the vehicle, dug-in enemy troops opened fire.<sup>16</sup> Corporal Thompson leapt into a nearby foxhole and returned fire. During the firefight, he was wounded in the leg and his comrade

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received wounds in the face and leg.<sup>17</sup> Injured, outnumbered, and needing to provide intelligence on enemy locations, Corporal Thompson assisted his fellow Soldier back to the vehicle and safety.

## **Colonel Angus B. MacLean**

### **Soldier's Medal**

### **United States**

Before becoming a military police Soldier, Angus MacLean served in the infantry with the 3d Infantry Division during World War II. He rose through the ranks from private to staff sergeant, earning two Purple Heart awards. Second Lieutenant MacLean would then receive the Silver Star for eliminating two enemy machine gun emplacements by directing machine gun fire from an exposed observation post.<sup>18</sup> Early in 1945, Colonel MacLean received a battlefield commission on the basis of his leadership skills.<sup>19</sup> After the war, he was assigned to the 14th Constabulary and then transferred to the Military Police Corps. He served at various locations and positions within the Army and Military Police Corps, including two tours in Vietnam.

Colonel MacLean would return to the United States as provost marshal for the Headquarters, Military District of Washington, DC. He personally oversaw the cooperation between local and military police agencies while they were dealing with the numerous protests during this time. On 8 August 1971, an alert call was received, stating that a man was threatening to blow up the Capitol Building with nitroglycerin.<sup>20</sup> Colonel MacLean rushed to the scene and advanced alone to the individual. Just a few months prior, on 1 March 1971, a bomb had exploded in the men's room on the Senate side of the Capitol. It destroyed the restroom and a barbershop, with no injuries. Fully aware of the danger, Colonel MacLean pushed onward and spoke to the individual for thirty minutes, finally convincing the man to relinquish his explosives.<sup>21</sup> Colonel MacLean received the Soldier's Medal for his efforts in disarming the bomber. After retiring from the military, Angus MacLean would serve as the first chief of the Metro Transit Police and director of security, responsible for the security and safety of countless commuters in the Washington, DC area.



### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Ronald Craig, compilation of military police awards, military police archives computer records, retrieved during June 2006.

<sup>2</sup>SP4 Russ Shor, Editor, "2 First Lieutenants Named for DSC," *The Round Up*, 18th Military Police Brigade Vietnam newspaper, February 1969, pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Center of Military History, Medal of Honor Citations, <[www.Army.mil/cmh-pg/mohciv2.htm](http://www.Army.mil/cmh-pg/mohciv2.htm)>.

<sup>5</sup>George N. Bliss, letter, published in *Soldiers' and Sailors' Historical Society of Rhode Island*, No. 6, reprinted in *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Volume 13, 1885, p. 429.

<sup>6</sup>George N. Bliss, "Reminiscences of Service in the First Rhode Island Cavalry," *Personal Narratives of the Battles of the Rebellion*, No. 3, 1878, p. 78.

<sup>7</sup>Center of Military History, Medal of Honor Citations, <[www.Army.mil/cmh-pg/mohciv2.htm](http://www.Army.mil/cmh-pg/mohciv2.htm)>.

<sup>8</sup>Home of Heroes, WWI U.S. Army Recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross-Citations, <[www.homeofheroes.com/verify/1\\_Citations/0\\_wwi\\_Army/dsc\\_05wwi\\_Army\\_FG.htm](http://www.homeofheroes.com/verify/1_Citations/0_wwi_Army/dsc_05wwi_Army_FG.htm)>.

<sup>9</sup>Colonel (Retired) Frank Cohn, Military Police Hall of Fame justification narrative, 20 February 2001.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Dr. Ronald Craig, compilation of military police awards, military police archives computer records, retrieved during June 2006.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Lieutenant Colonel Ralph E. Pearson, editor, "Action Awards," *The Provost Marshal's School Training and Newsletter*, June 1951, Volume II, No. 5, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Colonel (Retired) Frank Cohn, Military Police Hall of Fame justification narrative, 20 February 2001.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.